

Work Group Officers

Agriculture

* Chair: Ronald Mapes, Stockton
* Advisory Council Rep:
* Melvin Gration, Galena
* Sec: John Carless, Stockton

Economic Development

* Chair: Tom Werner, E. Dubuque
* Advisory Council Rep
* Dan Adams, E. Dubuque
* Sec: Helen Schumberger,
Stockton

Environment

* Chair: Jim Gitz, Freeport
* Advisory Council Rep:
* James Raeburn, Stockton
* Acting Sec: Sophie Findler,
Crystal Lake

Government

* Chair: Lynne Hesselbacher,
Elizabeth
* Advisory Council Rep:
* Bailey Schweitzer, Galena
* Sec: Jeff Winters, Elizabeth

Tourism

* Chair: Joe Wechtel, Galena
* Advisory Council Rep:
* Carol Roberts, Stockton
* Sec: Pete Peterson, Galena

Contact an individual above if you would like to become involved in a work group for the U.S. Rt. 20 study or call 800/837-RT20.

Work Groups Begin Rt. 20 Study

Local citizen work groups on agriculture, economic development, environment, government and tourism have begun to assess the engineering design and environmental impacts of a new four-lane highway in Stephenson and JoDaviess Counties.

The work groups met in the fall to adopt organizational rules and to elect a chair and a representative to serve on an Advisory Council that will make recommendations to the Illinois Department of Transportation on highway construction at the end of the three-and-one-half year study.

Work groups named their top concerns regarding highway construction including:

Agriculture: disturbance of existing roadway access, loss of prime farmland, dividing farms, fire district maintenance and soil erosion control.

Economic Development: effect on local industry, commercial outlets and community businesses and construction as a source of jobs.

Environment: need for a new highway, natural area and corridor protection, alignment choice and public information.

Government: maintenance of the old highway, provision of emergency and public services and agricultural concerns.

Tourism: placement of interchanges, limiting signs and aiding scenic preservation.

Advisory Council Meets To Set Agendas

IDOT's Rt. 20 Advisory Council met recently to adopt a constitution and by-laws and advise members of work group concerns (see above). They also decided that District Engineer William D. Ost would act

on the engineering design and environmental impacts of building a four-lane highway in northwest Illinois.

The Advisory Council will look at the no-build option as

"IDOT set up this public involvement process to hear people's concerns. We are as interested in hearing minority opinions as we are in majority opinions."

William D. Ost, District Engineer

as a nonvoting moderator. Members decided not to break the votes on issues so that minority as well as majority views would be presented as part of the Council's final report to IDOT.

well, Ost said. "If you feel a new highway is not needed, you should tell IDOT and your elected representatives, and your input will make a difference."

U.S. Rt. 20: Answers to Your Questions

Question: Can we expand the existing two-lane Rt. 20 highway to make a four-lane freeway?

Answer: Not without serious impacts. U.S. Rt. 20 has many adjacent farms, businesses and homes that depend on it for access. Freeway standards and laws limit the number of driveways and direct commercial access. Thus, additional frontage roads would be needed, resulting in construction of four additional lanes as well as two added turns for the freeway, displacing much existing development.

Question: Why doesn't IDOT explore the possibility of a more northerly highway corridor?

Answer: IDOT studied a northerly corridor in the late sixties but environmental concerns and lack of funding interrupted that work. Meanwhile, development occurred along existing U.S. 20 causing traffic increases that required additional improvements. Rather than diverting area resources to building two new highways, a new freeway in the existing corridor would best serve area-wide needs.

Question: Why did IDOT develop the theme "Glacier Shadow Pass" to promote building a new highway?

Answer: IDOT didn't develop the theme to promote the building of a new highway, but rather to focus people's attention on the land and the need to plan for its many uses. The theme was not meant to divert people's attention from difficult issues but to lend a theme of teamwork to the study.

Question: If a new highway were built, would we have access to the old roadway?

Answer: If study recommendations indicate a new highway should be built on a new alignment, the existing highway would be utilized as a scenic route. Access from the old road to the new facility would be via proposed interchanges. Because of the need to spend limited highway dollars across the State, this large project would be built in segments using portions of the existing highway for many years.

Illinois Department of Transportation
819 Depot Avenue
Dixon, Illinois 61021

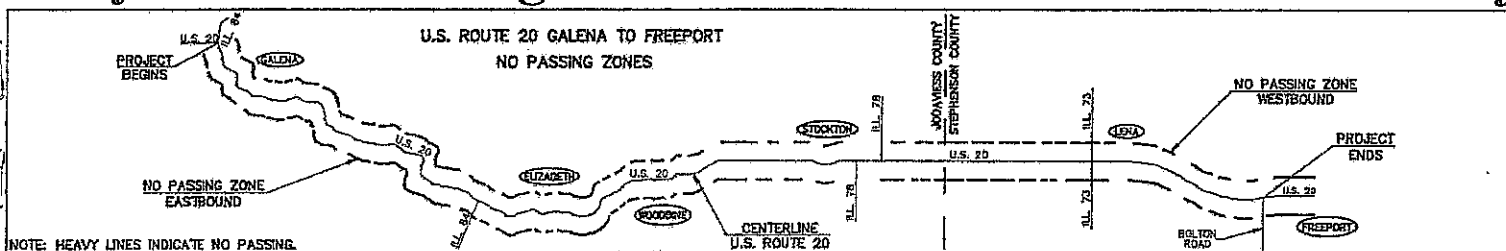
MAIL RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SPRINGFIELD, IL
PERMIT NO. 1073

U.S. Rt. 20 Questions?
Call 800/837-RT20

Printed on recycled paper using soy ink.



Study Shows No Passing Zones on Two-Thirds of Route 20 Roadway



At public information open house sessions in the fall in Stephenson and JoDaviess Counties, IDOT showed that no passing zones exist on 66 percent of U.S. Rt. 20 eastbound from Galena to Freeport and 63 percent along the westbound lane, according to Larry Reed, program development engineer.

"This high level of no passing zones on a hilly, rural highway makes travel very frustrating for drivers. They begin to take chances to get to their destinations.

And that results in injuries and the loss of life."

IDOT also displayed figures showing that from 1987 to 1992 there were six fatal accidents and

Further, the total number of accidents per year on Rt. 20 from 1987 to 1991 was much higher than the State average, ranging from 180 to 233 accidents a year

"If we did not see safety and other concerns for this highway, we wouldn't be spending funds of this magnitude to do a study."

William D. Ost, District Engineer

208 injuries in JoDaviess County and four fatal accidents and 155 injuries in Stephenson County.

Another map prepared by IDOT consultants Louis Berger & Associates, Inc. showed

Opinion Survey Focuses Local Concerns About Construction of a New Four-Lane Rt. 20 Freeway

An attitude survey conducted last summer in JoDaviess and Stephenson Counties showed that local residents love the land and want it to be protected if a new four-lane freeway is built in the region. The top concerns listed were loss of prime farmland, effect on wildlife habitat and the preservation of scenic beauty.

A total of 304 telephone interviews with adults over 18 years of age were conducted by IDOT consultants JDQ Engineers, Inc. in order to sample attitudes at one point in time. As engineering design and environmental impact studies become available for the public to analyze, attitudes may change. The survey will be repeated later in the study project after issues are more clearly known.

The survey also showed that 71 percent of residents in the two counties favor the construction

of a new highway. Sixteen percent were undecided and 13 percent said they opposed the project.

The survey was based on a random sample of names and telephone numbers in the two counties taken from the Donnelley Marketing DQI Master Residential File, which contains information on over 90 percent of all U.S. households.

The larger a random sample that is drawn the greater the chance that findings can be applied to the entire population. Thus, with a sample size of 300, an opinion held by 70 percent of those questioned could be in error by just plus or minus five percent when applied to the general population. But with a sample of only 100, any response when applied to the entire population could be off by plus or minus nine percent.

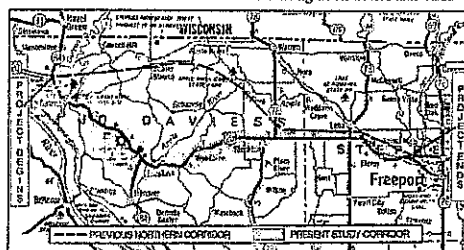
clusters of high accident locations from each three-year period ending in 1989, 1990 and 1991. There is a predominance of cluster locations in the Galena area, at the junction of IL 84 and Rt. 20 northwest of Galena and in the community of Eleroy. The occurrence of high accident locations along Rt. 20 from the IL 84 intersection northwest of Galena to the Bolton Road intersection west of Freeport is 12 times higher than the State average.

In addition, traffic volumes have been increasing at five percent a year. In 1991 the average daily traffic volume was 8800 vehicles on IL 84/Rt. 20 just north of Galena, approximately 4800 near Elizabeth and Woodbine, 6100 near Stockton and 7400 east of Galena Road near Freeport.

Highway design standards indicate that traffic volumes of 8800 exceed the warrants or need for a four-lane highway. Increasing truck traffic also adds

to the need. IDOT updated traffic counts on weekends in this recreational corridor over the past fall and will resume in the spring so that volumes for the 30th highest hour, a national design norm, can be identified.

Highways are not designed for a peak traffic load that occurs on a few times a year, but for the 30th highest hour of the year. In addition, highways are designed meet projected traffic needs 20 years into the future, not just for current needs.



The U.S. Rt. 20 Project Area Map shows a wide study corridor recommended by IDOT for a new four-lane highway to serve the majority of local population centers rather than a northerly route away from most communities. Its boundaries can shift to become wider or narrower over the course of the study period, depending on local issues, impacts and concerns identified in locating the roadway.

No Land Acquisition Yet For New Highway

IDOT District Engineer William D. Ost says that the agency has not begun to acquire land for a new four-lane highway. "If you're aware of land acquisition activities, it's for resurfacing highway projects on U.S. 20, not expansion of the road into a four-lane freeway."

White crosses placed on the ground are strictly reference markers for aerial surveys of the land. They do not indicate the actual location of a new highway.



NEWSLETTER

U.S. Route 20 Public Involvement Program

Vol. 1, No. 2, Sept. 1994

Work Group Officers

Agriculture

* Chair: Ronald Maples, Stockton
* Advisory Council Rep:
Malvin Grapton, Galena
* Sec: John Curtiss, Stockton

Economic Development

* Chair: Tom Werner, E. Dubuque
* Advisory Council Rep:
Don Adams, E. Dubuque
* Sec: Helen Schatzberger,
Stockton

Environment

* Chair: Jim Gitz, Freeport
* Advisory Council Rep:
James Raeburn, Stockton
* Acting Sec: Sophie Fiedler,
Crystal Lake

Government

* Chair: Lynne Hesselbacher,
Elizabeth
* Advisory Council Rep:
Deb Schleicher, Galena
* Sec: Jeff Winters, Elizabeth

Tourism

* Advisory Council Rep:
Katie Finerman, Elizabeth
* Sec: Pete Peterson, Galena

Contact an individual above if you
would like to become involved in a
work group for the U.S. Rt. 20
study or call 1-800-837-RT20.

Advisory Council Meets to Discuss Concerns Members express views on freeway alignments

The U.S. Route 20 Advisory Council members representing Work Groups on Agriculture, Economic Development, Environment, Government and Tourism at a recent meeting gave their initial reaction to IDOT's preliminary alignment proposals.

Gratton said members have talked with 70 landowners living along the proposed alignments. Most concern centers on access to severed land parcels, safety on the old road, tile drain disruption and loss of prime farmland.

"We want to study the new alignments in more detail and review natural resource inventories."

Deb Schleicher, Advisory Council Spokesperson

Government Work Group Chair Lynne Hesselbacher told the Advisory Council that meetings are being held with officials in local communities to determine where interchanges should go.

Agriculture Work Group Advisory Council Rep Mel

Gratton also read a letter from the Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau supporting a new four-lane Route 20 highway.

Tom Werner, Economic Development Work Group Chair, said that by-passes do

(continued on page 3)

IDOT Shows Preliminary Locations For A New Freeway From Freeport to Galena

After a year of study, IDOT's consultant, Louis Berger & Assoc. Inc. of IL, working with local officials has developed preliminary freeway locations for the public and Route 20 Work Groups to review.

"We have been looking at a wide study corridor. Now we want everyone's input on where the highway should be placed within that corridor or where the corridor needs to be modified. We are

viewing the alignment not as a fixed line, but a rubber band," said William D. Ost, IDOT District Engineer. "People have been asking for an alignment to study for about a year now."

As now drawn, the current alignment proposals would by-pass Galena on the northeast side, then proceed either through Long Hollow or

(continued on page 3)

U.S. Rt. 20: Answers to Your Questions

Question: Why must Tapley Woods along existing U.S. Route 20 be protected in a highway expansion?

Answer: The Illinois Department of Conservation manages Tapley Woods; thus, it must be preserved. IDOT has been resurfacing and widening Route 20 recently, and IDOT has allowed a few trees to be cut, however, many are being protected with wood frames. There are other wooded areas in the Route 20 study corridor that do not enjoy such protection. They may be acquired for construction of a freeway.

Question: Could Routes 11 and 81 in Wisconsin be used for a new east-west freeway corridor?

Answer: No, the State of Wisconsin at present has no plans to upgrade those highways. Also, a new highway that far north would fail to serve the majority of Illinois communities which have developed close to existing Route 20 and would fail to lower traffic volumes in this area as well.

Question: How will the public be kept up-to-date on new technical study findings in the project?

Answer: IDOT's consultants will release information on engineering and environmental impact and the location of each alignment being studied at Joint Work Group meetings so that everyone involved in project study gains access to new information simultaneously. Work Groups will then present their concerns to IDOT at Advisory Council meetings. The public can comment at any meeting.

Question: Why such a costly study? It's been done before; so why not just build the highway?

Answer: Studies prior to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 did not require extensive assessment of human and natural environmental impacts of a large federal construction project. Today, an environmental impact statement is required by law and is being carried out with Route 20 studies. Funding is through the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Act of 1991.

Illinois Department of Transportation

819 Depot Avenue
Dixon, Illinois 61021

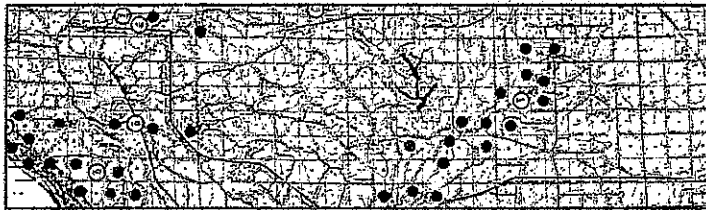
BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SPRINGFIELD IL
PERMIT NO. 1073

U.S. Rt. 20 Questions?
Call 800/837-RT20

Printed on recycled paper using soy ink.



Environment Work Group Study Shows E/T Species, Natural Areas



The above map shows a portion of the Environment Work Group's natural resource study area in which a concentration of threatened and endangered wildlife are found around the Apple River Canyon region.

The Route 20 Environment Work Group has developed a map of Jo Daviess County showing natural areas and threatened and endangered species (see above).

Work group members are using the map as a guide in plotting other natural features in the area to study the impacts of building a four-lane freeway in

northwest Illinois, said Jim Gitz, Work Group Chair.

Individuals will be looking in people's backyards, in old cemeteries and along abandoned railroad beds for wetlands, stream segments, agricultural land as a natural buffer, woodlands, archeological sites, wildlife corridors and other features.

The Illinois State Natural History Survey has also been contracted with by the Illinois Department of Transportation to identify natural features of Stephenson and Jo Daviess Counties. The data gathered by the Environment Work Group will help to supplement other studies which are being done on a broader scale, Gitz said.

Route 20 Work Groups Develop Impact Studies

Tourism - Bike Trail

The Tourism Work Group recently formed a subcommittee to locate scenic points along existing Route 20 for a potential bicycle or recreational trail to be associated with a new four-lane highway.

A trail could be located along the old highway, along a new freeway, along abandoned railroad beds or a combination of all three.

Government - Interchanges

The Government Work Group

has met with local officials in communities along Route 20 recently to determine where they would want interchanges if a four-lane freeway were built.

"Elizabeth is interested in an alternate interchange location northwest of town, and Woodbine has requested a possible interchange north of town," said Lynne Hesselbacher, Work Group Chair.

Economic Impact Study

The Economic Development

Work Group has launched its own study of the economic impact of by-passes around communities in Illinois and other states.

Agriculture - Property Taking

The Agriculture Work Group has been divided into area subcommittees which will study the impact of new proposed alignments on the farming community, according to Chair Ron Mapes. "We will divide the alignments into six or seven mile segments to get a good idea of the impacts up close."



IDOT District Engineer William D. Ost (right) stretches a rubber band to show that moving the road also shifts impacts.

Kiosks Set Up For Local Input

Information kiosks have been placed in the post offices in Galena, Lena and Warren and in the Freeport village hall for local residents to pick up current materials on the U.S. Route 20 study project (see photo below). Meeting notices are posted in a display window on the kiosks as well.

In addition, question/answer cards are available in a kiosk display holder. Once filled out, individuals can place the cards in a kiosk mail slot, and IDOT will answer questions by return mail.

And the libraries in Galena, Elizabeth, Freeport and Stockton have materials for distribution.



IDOT Consultants Begin Studies on Local Property

Many of the consultants hired by IDOT to complete the engineering design and environmental impact studies for the Route 20 study project are now surveying on private property. They should identify themselves before entering private land. Please call IDOT 815/284-2271 if you are unsure about a surveyor's presence.

Preliminary Locations For Highway . . . continued

Irish Hollow to a point east of Elizabeth and then closely follow existing Route 20 to the north between Stockton and Freeport.

These preliminary alignments have been placed considering farm field lines and/or property lines, the location of farmhouses and outbuildings, visual corridor impact, possible interchange locations and preliminary wetlands -- "to avoid 'hot spots' for major impacts that we know about now," Ost said. However, over the next two years the alignments will be refined as Work Groups look more closely at engineering design and environmental impacts being identified by IDOT's consultants.

Rockford Airport Supports Freeway

A representative of the Greater Rockford Airport Authority recently attended an Economic Development Work Group meeting and presented a resolution supporting the expansion of Route 20.

The resolution addressed the airport's role in "securing the region's future" in terms of transportation options.

Specifically, after Work Group Chairs in July reviewed preliminary alignments, they met with their members to discuss whether changes in location are needed.

Then in late summer, the Advisory Council met to identify and compare Work Group concerns.

Advisory Council Meets on Issues . . . continued

not kill towns, based on members' studies of by-passes in Illinois and other states. "Communities that prepare for it are far less likely to experience an economic decline."

Environment Work Group Chair Jim Gitz said members want IDOT to study the cost and impacts of upgrading existing Route 20, to do a fog study for Long and Irish Hollows and to consider options outside the study corridor. IDOT District Engineer William D. Ost said the agency will study existing Route 20.

Tourism concerns centered around negative impacts on scenery, increasing truck traffic, substandard development at interchanges and overcrowding. Positive impacts noted were by-passes at Galena and Elizabeth.



NEWSLETTER

U.S. Route 20 Public Involvement Program
Vol. 1, No. 3, April, 1995

Work Group Officers

Agriculture

* Chair: Pamela Mapes, Stockton
* Advisory Council Rep:
Melvin Grallin, Galena
* Sec: John Curtiss, Stockton

Economic Development

* Chair: Tom Werner, E. Dubuque
* Advisory Council Rep:
Dan Adams, E. Dubuque
* Sec: Helen Schaubberger,
Stockton

Environment

* Chair: Jim Gitz, Freeport
* Advisory Council Rep:
James Bachay, Stockton
* Sec: Sophie Fiedler,
Crystal Lake

Government

* Chair: Lynne Hessebacher,
Elizabeth
* Advisory Council Rep:
Paul Gornier, Galena
* Sec: Jeff Winders, Elizabeth

Tourism

* Co-Chair: Kate Freeman,
Garland Bauman, Elizabeth
* Advisory Council Rep:
Tony Kemp, Galena
* Sec: Pat Peterson, Galena

Contact an individual above if you
would like to become involved in a
work group for the U.S. Rt. 20
study or call 1-800-837-RT20.

Work Group Surveys Assess Impacts

Members Report Business, Landowner Opinions

Route 20 Business Survey
A Tourism Work Group survey of 91 businesses along existing Rt. 20 found that 79% of respondents think a freeway may decrease their business activity; 65% (59 businesses) answered the survey.

Some 58% think a freeway may decrease their land values; 16% say it may increase land values and 24% say it may have no impact; 83% favored improving old Rt. 20 with by-passes around towns rather than building a freeway.

County-Wide Business Survey
An Economic Development Work Group survey of 2,795 businesses in Stephenson and Jo Daviess Counties found that 61% of respondents think a freeway is important to their future; 32% (894 businesses) answered the survey. Some 21% have difficulty in

shipping/receiving goods via Rt. 20; 52% want to expand their business in the next 3-5 years; 56% said none of their business is tourism-related; and 90% are satisfied with IDOT's interchange proposals (about which the Government Work Group has met with local officials over the past year).

Property Owners
Agriculture Work Group subcommittees and Louis Berger & Assoc. have met with property owners along the alignments to minimize splitting farming operations and to adjust alignments to run near property lines where possible. Environment Work Group members continue to assess potential environmental impacts along the alignments.

Advisory Council to Begin Work on Identifying Areas of General Consensus

During the next year and one-half, the Rt. 20 Advisory Council will develop a format for analyzing and making overall recommendations concerning the impacts of a four-lane freeway in northwest Illinois.

The Council, composed of two representatives from each of five Work Groups, will define areas of agreement and identify where an alignment needs more work to help alleviate impacts.

The Council will then prepare its recommendations for submission to IDOT. The state agency will write an environmental impact statement for the Federal Highway Administration to review in determining where, how and if a freeway should be placed in the region. Local residents are urged to remain involved as the study moves toward its conclusion.

U.S. Rt. 20: Answers to Your Questions

Question: What interests originated a Rt. 20 freeway environmental impact study in northwest Illinois?

Answer: In 1985 a Freeport resident worked with former State Rep. Dick Mulcahey to gather 13,000 signatures on a petition seeking a four-lane freeway. It was sent to Gov. James Thompson. In the late 1980s, a group of local officials and business owners formed the Jo Daviess-Stephenson Counties Highway 20 Association and worked with Congressional representatives to fund the study.

Question: How would the construction of a new freeway be funded?

Answer: Only funds for the study have been approved. If a highway is built, funding for construction will have to be approved from federal and state gasoline tax revenues (typically 80% federal, 20% state) and state-issued bonds. Tax dollars available for education and other public programs are not used.

Question: How much longer will the study take with a third alternate alignment added?

Answer: The project study of the original alternate alignments proposed by IDOT was to have taken around 3 1/2 years to complete. A full study of a third alternate alignment in Jo Daviess County could add another year and cost an additional \$1 million. After aerial mapping, IDOT will attempt to develop a feasible alignment in the new corridor (see map inside) and determine if continued study is warranted.

Question: Where can the public obtain project study information?

Answer: Kiosks with current project information have been placed in post offices in Galena, Warren, Lena and Freeport. An individual may also call 1-800-837-RT20 to obtain the latest study documents. Notice of meetings and new study findings will be sent also to local news outlets via press releases and will be the subject of periodic Joint Work Group and Public Information meetings in the region.

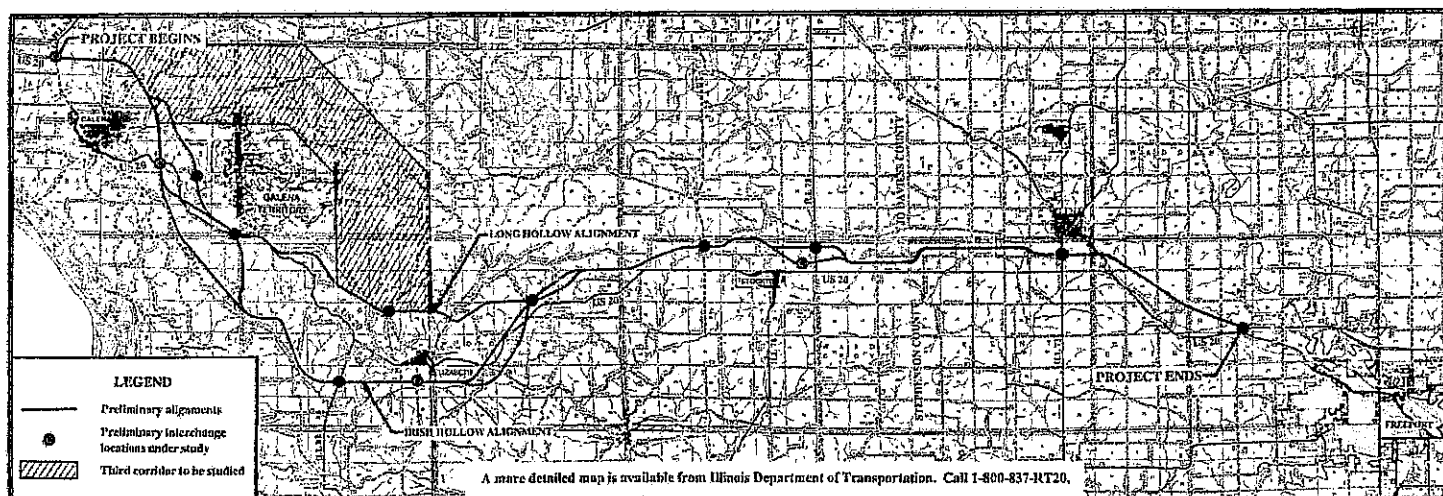
Illinois Department of Transportation
818 Depot Avenue
Dixon, Illinois 61021

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SPRINGFIELD, IL
PERMIT NO. 1073

U.S. Rt. 20 Questions?
Call 800/837-RT20

Printed on recycled paper using soy ink.

Third Alignment Added to Route 20 Four-lane Freeway Study Project



The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is examining a third potential freeway alignment in Jo Daviess County as part of its environmental impact assessment of a four-lane freeway in northwest Illinois. It would run north and east of Galena Territory somewhere within the hatched corridor shown above, joining the Long Hollow alignment near Elizabeth.

The Rt. 20 Environment Work Group asked IDOT to consider studying the alignment, according to William D. Ost, IDOT District Engineer, due to environmental considerations of the Long Hollow and the Irish Hollow alignments. Long Hollow and Irish Hollow alignments are still under consideration as well. Biological inventories have been conducted over the

past year, showing the location of wetlands and endangered wildlife. In addition, Agriculture Work Group subcommittees and IDOT engineering consultants Louis Berger & Associates met with property owners along the Long Hollow and Irish Hollow alignments throughout the winter to make shifts to minimize splitting farms and to adjust alignments to run near property lines where possible, Ost said.

Alignment Consensus Areas

"The alignment between Stockton and Freeport is now fairly well defined, and there seems to be general agreement on placement," Ost said. Much work on interchange placement also has been

accomplished by the Government Work Group and local officials to assure that by-passes are accessible to all communities along Rt. 20.

IDOT and the Work Groups are still examining impacts in detail on the three alternate alignments in Jo Daviess County. Placement of a freeway becomes more difficult between Galena and Stockton, Ost said, due to the rugged terrain and sensitive plant and animal habitat as well as high quality wetlands found there.

Proximity to Old Rt. 20

Any new freeway alignment to be potentially viable must be located close enough to the existing Rt. 20 roadway to draw a substantial amount of traffic away and reduce traffic volumes and improve safety on the

old road. A freeway located farther away from old Rt. 20 in northern Jo Daviess County would not lower traffic volumes in the long term.

IDOT and the Work Groups will continue to study freeway impacts over the next year to determine which alignment has the least negative impact on the region's environment and economy and best fulfills study objectives to improve safety, reduce traffic volumes on the two-lane highway so it can better serve local needs and foster economic development. "The Work Groups were set up to be a wide cross-section of the region's population. Membership is open. Please join the study if you have concerns and interests to express," Ost said.